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Restoration of Abstracts in MEDLINE

Users of MEDLINE, NLM's on-line file of journal article references, are aware that abstracts have been temporarily dropped for references input into MEDLINE since August 1977. This was necessary because of a limitation on the absolute physical size of the data base.

When the new (1978) MEDLINE file is provided for service at the end of this year the abstracts for August through December will be added, and abstracts will be added monthly again beginning in January as before. Several changes are being made that should prevent a recurrence of the problem in 1978:

1. Abstracts over 200 words will not be included, except for articles longer than 10 pages. Publishers are being notified of this change to encourage them to provide shorter abstracts.

2. When the new MEDLINE file is generated at the end of this year, references with a *publication date* of 1975 or earlier will be put in a BACK75 file.

3. Four elements are being deleted from the file: author affiliation, place of publication, record source, and priority. These elements will be retained in SDILINE, however, so that users of SDI service will still be able to use them and to request reprints from authors.

Although the net result of these actions will be a smaller MEDLINE file (about 380,000 citations growing to 630,000 by the end of next year), the problem of file overflow will be solved.

Expanded On-Line Serials File

SERLINE (SERials on-line) will be available for network searching late this month. The new SERLINE contains approximately 35,000 records representing all serials and numbered congresses which are on order, in process, or currently received at NLM. Ceased serials in the NLM collection are being added to the file gradually. Since CATLINE includes only records for titles *cataloged* since 1965, SERLINE contains many serial titles which are not found in the on-line catalog. Location symbols for approximately 120 resource libraries in the Regional Medical Library Network currently appear on about 6500 primary, substantive journals in the file. In early 1978, SERLINE will assume the MEDLINE citation input and publication functions of the present Journal Authority File; and the separate Journal Authority File will be removed from the network.

SERLINE is designed to support interlibrary loan and cooperative acquisitions activities throughout the Regional Medical Library Network by providing readily searchable bibliographic, acquisitions, and location information for biomedical serials. The file includes the current NLM call number for all titles in NLM's collection and the ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) when available. To speed processing at NLM, libraries should include both of these elements on those interlibrary loan requests that they verify in the SERLINE file.

SERLINE can also be used to produce tailored subject, language, or location lists to meet local reference and interlibrary loan requirements.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
NEWS

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A Week That Was: Varied Audiences Served by CTS

The versatility of the PHS/CTS Satellite Communications Network (*News*, May 1977) and the potential of broadband biomedical communications were demonstrated in three separate transmissions during the week beginning October 8:

• On October 8, Nichelle Nichols, known to millions of Star Trek fans as Lt. Uhura, communications officer of the Federation Starship *Enterprise*, moderated "YOUTH SATCON '77: Relate and Communicate," a drug abuse prevention teleconference for youth. Appearing with Ms. Nichols in NLM's Bethesda studios were Dr. Robert DuPont, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), which sponsored the program, and Dr. Joseph Hendrick of NIDA's Prevention Branch. The satellite allowed the youthful participants located in Bethesda, Lexington (KY), Seattle, and Menlo Park (CA), to carry on an animated, interactive discussion. The Menlo Park site was provided by the Archdiocese of San Francisco, which has a receive-only satellite terminal. Responses there were beamed via microwave to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Ames (CA) facility, and from there, via CTS back to Bethesda. The Lexington signals were shipped back via the Applications Technology Satellite, ATS-6.

Nichelle Nichols (2nd from left), Lt. Uhura of the TV series "Star Trek," moderated a three-hour teleconference in which young participants in four cities exchanged ideas and discussed issues affecting the involvement of youth in drugs and in programs that offer alternatives to drug abuse. Ms. Nichols is shown with Alenia Sammy, and with Dr. Robert DuPont and Dr. Joseph Hendrick (right) of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

This is the first time that a communications network using two satellites and these four earth stations has been attempted. The participants agreed that the meeting was valuable and looked forward to future such interactive conferences.

• On October 9, the Monsour Medical Foundation of Jeannette (PA) sponsored a two-hour seminar on "Vaccines: Uses and Problems." The seminar was moderated by Dr. Monto Ho, Chief, Division of Infectious Diseases, University of Pittsburgh. With him in Bethesda was Dr. Samuel Katz, Department of Pediatrics, Duke University School of Medicine. The primary target of the telecast was the International Telecommunications Exhibition ("INTELCOM '77") in Atlanta, where it was received by NASA's Portable Earth Terminal parked in back of the World Congress Center. Speaking from Atlanta were Dr. Walter Dowdle, Virology Division and Dr. Alan Hinman, Bureau of State

Services, both of the Center for Disease Control. Dr. Edward Kass, Director of the Channing Laboratory, Harvard Medical School, and Dr. Richard Krause, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, appeared by videotape.

The program was also received by several of the stations of the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), which have CTS terminals, and taped for later public television use. Signals were also received by the South Carolina Educational Television Network, which rebroadcast the first hour of the telecast live to the public. The second hour, specifically aimed towards physicians, was rebroadcast to the 30 hospitals of the South Carolina Hospital Network. The Greater Atlanta Hospital Network had a delayed rebroadcast.

The CTS videosignals were also received by the NASA Earth Station at Rosman (NC), uplinked to the ATS-6, and then sent to ATS-6 earth terminals, including one at the Monsour Medical Foundation in Jeannette—marking the first direct satellite communication to Westmoreland County (PA).

• On October 14, two Congressmen—Rep. Frederick W. Richmond (D-NY) and Rep. Robert S. Walker (R-PA) addressed 600 dietitians at the annual meeting of the American Dietetic Association in Los Angeles. They spoke from NLM's Bethesda studios. The signals were received in California by NASA-Goddard's portable terminal, operated by the Public Service Satellite Consortium, and parked near the Los Angeles Convention Center.

RTECS: New Data Base

A new on-line data retrieval file, the *Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances* (RTECS), has been added to NLM's family of on-line services. As with MEDLINE and TOXLINE, RTECS is available at the standard NLM on-line user charge rates. RTECS, formerly the *Toxic Substances List,* is an annual compilation prepared by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) as mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (PL 91-596). The printed version, which is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, offers a detailed description of the purpose and content of RTECS. The 1976 edition (GPO order number 017-033-00166-9, price $13.50) is the most recent issue available; the 1977 edition is scheduled to appear later this year.

RTECS contains toxicity data for approximately 21,000 substances known by approximately 60,000 synonyms. RTECS also contains some listings of toxicological effects, presented in an abbreviated format. In addition, it contains threshold limit values, recommended standards in air, aquatic toxicity, and the like. Unlike the printed version, which can be accessed only by compound name, the on-line RTECS has many access points for retrieval, such as toxicity data, species of laboratory animal, route of administration, etc. For more information contact:

RTECS
Toxicology Information Program
National Library of Medicine
8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20014

Personnel Notes

Holman S. Gray

Employees at the Library were saddened to learn of the death on October 12 of Holman S. Gray, a supply specialist with NLM since 1968. Mr. Gray, who suffered from a heart ailment, died three months before he was scheduled to retire from Government service.

Gains

• Richard Wiles, Computer Operator, Office of Computer and Communications Systems
• Barbara Bishop, Accounting Technician, Technical Services Division

Losses

• Serena Fisher, Secretary, Reference Services Division
• Rick Holt, Computer Specialist, Lister Hill Center

Six NLM Associates Welcomed

On October 20th a reception was held at the Library to welcome the six new Library Associates who are beginning a year of intensive training (*News*, June 1977). Their program includes a course in on-line searching, lectures on the various Library programs, and practical experience. The Associates, all recent recipients of masters degrees in library science, appear below with their undergraduate majors and library schools.

Martha Benzer (biology), University of California at Los Angeles.

James Cain (biology), Emory University

Daza Craig (biology), North Texas State University

Patricia Healy (German), University of Michigan

Marguerite Kelly (zoology, physiology), University of California at Berkeley

Julia Sollenberger (mathematics), University of Indiana

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